

Shirley School Committee Minutes  
Shirley Middle School  
November 17, 2004

Present: Gary Bourassa, Chairperson  
Paul Wilson  
Bob Prescott  
Don Parker

Also Present: Dr. Thomas Scott, Superintendent

The meeting began at 7:01 p.m.

Public Participation:

A concerned parent asked the committee members why the middle school is offering co-ed, multi-grade level P.E. classes. The committee members commented that all of the specials seem to be offered on that manner. Dr. Scott will look into the matter.

Old Business:

The committee reviewed the minutes of the October 27, 2004 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Parker to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Prescott and approved.

Information regarding the FY05 budget approval was not available for the meeting. The information will be available for the next meeting, scheduled for December 1, 2004.

Business Affairs:

Dr. Scott reviewed Payroll warrants 817 and 317.

Dr. Scott informed the committee that the FY04 Year-End Report was not available for this meeting.

New Business:

Dr. Scott reviewed the FY05 District Goals. The first goal, Curriculum, involves implementing a challenging and cohesive K-8 curriculum and a variety of instructional strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of all of the students. Dr. Scott stated that he plans to address these needs in the following manner:

- Increase the number of students who achieve the "Proficient" level on the MCAS test. This will be achieved by focusing on test taking skills and weekly scheduled flex blocks for both math and English Language Arts. This will also be achieved by offering ELA for 90 minutes each morning and up to 60 minutes of math daily.

- Reorganizing general education and special education departments into a unified system to meet the diverse needs of all students. This will be accomplished by clearly defining criteria for SPED qualification, clarifying the roles of SPED and general education teachers, including SPED staffing in the FY06 budget, providing professional development and having highly qualified content teachers teaching SPED students, per NCLB requirements.
- Begin the process of identifying and supporting children with Limited English Proficiency (LEP). This will be done by appointing an LEP coordinator, identifying those students with LEP, developing a procedure to register these students in order to provide services, train two staff members and administrators to test for language development and begin an English immersion program.
- Participate in Education Quality and Accountability audit.
- Participate in NEASC process by sending teams of people to observe the accreditation process.
- SPED audit at Shirley Middle School.
- Peer Review by Finance Committee.
- Continue teacher contract negotiations.

The second goal, Facilities, involves providing a clean, orderly and safe learning environment. This goal can be achieved by the following:

- Conducting a study at LAW to review renovations that may be needed, as approved at Town Meeting through the capital improvement study.
- Maintain cleanliness of the buildings – Dr. Scott recommends additional custodial and supervisory support be included in the FY06 budget.
- Work with Devens with regard to the education of the Devens students after June 2006.
- Negotiate a new Mass Development contract in the future, if necessary.

Goal three, Climate, involves creating a learning environment that is characterized by care and respect. This goal can be achieved by the following:

- Increasing student discipline.
- Increasing respect among the students as well as with the teachers for their students.
- Continue the Peer Mediation program.
- Implementing behavior guidelines.
- Implementing the Second Step Guidance program for grades K-3 that was received by state grant monies.
- Provide two Love and Logic parent groups this year with monies from state grant.

Goal four, Community, involves strengthening the partnership between community and school through increased communication and involvement. This can be achieved by increasing volunteers and substitutes within the district as well as continuing to have the school committee be involved in town boards like the deficit committee.

Mr. Wilson commented that he would like to have penmanship classes offered to the students. Mr. Prescott commented that these classes are offered at the younger grade levels but that they seem to not have any continuation into the upper grades. Mr. Wilson would also like to see more concentration on memorization of the multiplication tables. Dr. Scott stated that the Addison Wesley math program implemented last year addressed this task. Mr. Wilson also would like to see a working custodial supervisor hired to oversee the entire school district. Dr. Scott stated that this was addressed in the second goal, Facilities.

A motion was made by Mr. Prescott to accept the FY05 District Goal, including Mr. Wilson's request for more concentration penmanship. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

Correspondence:

The committee reviewed a PTA thank you letter.

Information:

Dr. Scott reviewed the LAW Behavior Guidelines. These guidelines were developed with Mrs. Mahoney and 20 teachers at LAW. Dr. Scott stated that the result of the behavior study was the desire to implement an in-school suspension program. Should such a program be started there would be a need to hire someone with the appropriate background to supervise any child who would require these services. Mr. Parker, while in favor of an in-school suspension program, also would like to continue with an out-of-school suspension program for those situations that warrant it. Mr. Parker also commended those involved in developing the guidelines for their thoroughness.

Dr. Scott informed the committee that there are currently 720 students enrolled in Shirley. 32 of these students are from Devens and 67 are students who are school choiced in to Shirley.

Public Participation:

As there was none the committee closed their regular session so that they could go into Executive Session.

Roll Call:

Gary Bourassa: Yes    Bob Prescott: Yes    Don Parker: Yes    Paul Wilson: Yes

The members adjourned at 7:40 p.m. for their Executive Session.

The committee reconvened at 9:05 p.m. so they could adjourn for the evening. A motion was made to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved.

Respectfully submitted by:

Karen Gutheil